

Peroxide

WILLIAM JOLLIFF

The first time her sisters helped her
while their mom was still at work,
bracing her head above the sink,
giggling instructions from a magazine.
It must've sung just what she had to say.

Now she looks like someone who earns
her whistles at stoplights, who never
sits out a dance at the Rocking Horse.
But standing in the Wal-Mart line
this humid afternoon, waiting for

her clone to scan a bag of somethings,
chattering about the relative quality
of generic Oil of Olay, that hair earns
more than the years she hoped for then,
as each yellow strand splinters into words.